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GENERAL STUDIES 2: SOCIAL JUSTICE

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TOPIC: EDUCATION

SUCCESS IN THE CLASSROOM

ASER 2024: Nationwide Recovery in Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) Skills

What is the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER)?

- ASER is a citizen-led household survey assessing school enrolment and learning outcomes in rural India.
- Conducted annually since 2005, it is the largest citizen-led survey in India.
- Provides representative estimates on enrolment (ages 3-16) and literacy/numeracy (ages 5-16) at national, state, and district levels.

Recovery from Post-Pandemic Learning Losses

- ASER 2024 shows a full recovery in FLN skills across India's rural districts.
- Learning losses from COVID-19 disruptions in 2022 have been reversed.
- Class III students reading at a Class II level rose from 20.5% in 2022 to 27.1% in 2024.
- Class V reading proficiency improved from 42.8% (2022) to 48.8% (2024).
- Arithmetic skills have seen a decade-high recovery, with 33.7% of Class III students demonstrating subtraction proficiency.

Government Schools Driving Learning Gains

- The learning recovery has been entirely led by government schools.
- Historically, private schools outperformed government institutions due to socio-economic advantages.
- ASER 2024 indicates private schools still lag behind pre-pandemic levels, while government schools have surged ahead.
- Arithmetic proficiency in government schools increased by 36.6% (Class III) from 2022 to 2024, compared to a 10.2% rise in private schools.



Impact of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020

- NEP 2020's emphasis on foundational literacy and numeracy is a key driver of improvements.
- Unlike previous fragmented policies, NEP 2020 provides a structured, national-level push for FLN.
- Large-scale improvements across states indicate successful implementation of FLN-focused policies.

State-Wise Progress and Notable Success Stories

- Low-performing states (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu) have made significant strides.
- Uttar Pradesh's Class III reading proficiency rose from 6% (2014) to 27.9% (2024), signaling a deliberate improvement in FLN.
- High-performing states (Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra) also reversed pandemic-driven declines.
- State-specific strategies aligned with NEP 2020 goals have driven nationwide FLN improvements.

Conclusion

- ASER 2024 highlights India's collective effort to improve foundational literacy and numeracy.
- A unified framework under NEP 2020 has enabled structured improvements across diverse states.
- The progress made is a turning point for primary education in India.
- Continued efforts are necessary to sustain these gains and build a strong educational foundation.

Government Initiatives Related to Education:

- National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning
- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
- PRAGYATA
- Mid-Day Meal Scheme
- Beti Bachao Beti Padhao



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- PM SHRI Schools
- **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020:** Introduces local language-based education till Class 5, new assessment structures, and targets 6% of GDP for education.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/ahead-of-budget-2025-why-india-should-take-a-conservative-approach-to-growth-9802501/>



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